

THE SWORD OF THE LORD

EDITED BY JOHN R. RICE
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"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

An Independent Religious Weekly, Standing for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the Deity of Christ, His Blood Atonement, Salvation by Faith, New Testament Soul Winning and the Premillennial Return of Christ. Opposes Sin, Modernism, and Denominational Overlordship

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"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is the command of the Word of God (Matt. 19:19). So here is your chance to do a favor for yourself and some neighbor or loved one or friend. Here is our special offer. Two subscriptions, ten months each, only \$1.00. Thus you get twenty months for \$1.00 instead of twelve months and you divide your blessings with someone else. This offer is good for new or renewal subscriptions for a limited time only. Even if your subscription has not expired, you had better renew at once and we will add ten months to your expiration date besides sending it to any other friend you choose for ten months. Act now! Send \$1.00 with two names and addresses (one of them may be your own if you like) and each will receive *The Sword of the Lord* ten full months, nearly one year. We must have many new subscriptions. Subscribers will get a series of articles by C. B. Hedstrom, Chicago, on "How To Live Without Worry"; revival messages by the fervent Jew evangelist, Hyman Appelmann from Seminary Hill, Texas; and other strong messages by Rev. Sam Morris of Del Rio, Texas; Rev. T. Myron Webb, Enid, Oklahoma; and others. There will be stirring articles on prophecy in the light of world events, articles on temperance, soul winning, revivals and other vital themes. Editor John R. Rice will continue answering Bible questions, will answer youth's problems about amusements, dress, dance, movies, cosmetics, and moral questions and will give frequently, burning soul winning sermons. A real treat is in store for readers of *The Sword of the Lord* the next ten months.

This morning's mail is a sample of the wonderful blessings of God upon this paper. From Norton, Virginia, a godly woman writes:

"Dear Brother Rice:

"You cannot realize how thankful I am for the sample of your sermons and I feel that God directed them to me in answer to my prayers. I couldn't get my husband to read them so I begged him to listen to me read them, and he came to Jesus on his knees Tuesday night!"

The rest of her letter is full of praise, and she sends her subscription. And with it, signed by her husband, is the decision slip from the editor's sermon, *Appointed To Die*, published three weeks ago.

We doubt if any religious publication in America is resulting in so many conversions as *The Sword of the Lord*. I have heard from many of these converts and doubtless many more trusted Christ who never wrote to say so.

We hope to enlarge the paper. We will carry articles and sermons of wider interest to fundamentally sound Christians everywhere and hold up Christ and His Word.

Remember that *The Sword of the Lord* will continue to stand firm for the verbal inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, His blood atonement, for salvation through grace, a literal Hell and Heaven and the premillennial return of Christ and will be red hot for evangelism and the separated life.

Love your neighbor as yourself! As you send in your subscription, subscribe for some loved one, too, at this great saving. Your help now will mean souls saved, Christians blessed, preachers and Christian workers inspired.

Use the subscription coupon printed elsewhere in this paper if you wish, or write us today, with two names and addresses and \$1.00. Each will get *The Sword of the Lord* for ten months of blessing.

Lord Blessing Bro. Sam Morris' Work

We were happy to have Brother Sam Morris as visitor in the office of *The Sword of the Lord* today (Wednesday). He was on his way back home from Winona Lake, Indiana. He has traveled 24,000 miles this summer in twenty-two states, conducting revival meetings, speaking in Bible Conferences, and campaigning for temperance. He concluded his summer activities at Winona Lake Bible Conference, the biggest Bible Conference in the world, where he spoke each day by remote control over the Moody Bible Institute radio station, WMBI, and on the conference program, giving the principal address of the conference on Sunday afternoon to the biggest audience that has been gathered in Winona in a number of years in the big Billy Sunday Tabernacle. His subject was "Wine, Women and Song." He is hurrying on to Del Rio, Texas, to prepare for his winter radio season which will be given over the world's most powerful broadcasting station beginning October 1st. Specific periods of broadcast will be announced through this paper a little later.

Concerning his revival meeting in Princeton, Indiana, Rev. Ford Porter, pastor of the First Baptist Church, wrote the editor the following:

"We had a blessed time with Sam again this summer. The

last night I am sure there were at least 5,000 people under and around the tent. The boys who were looking after the parking said there were more than 1,000 cars, by actual count, besides those parked in the streets, and on some streets for several blocks. Some said we had at least 6,000. It was the greatest Christian demonstration we have had in this city for many years if not ever. There were a great many who came confessing Christ as their Saviour.

"Unfortunately I had to be layed up with an infected foot practically all the last week of the meeting.

"It was Sam's sixth appearance here, so you can see he has not run out in this place. We are looking forward to his return. He is preaching with more power than ever. If the Lord tarries, Sam is destined to be one of the greatest preachers of his generation, and will take his place with Moody, Torrey, Spurgeon, Sunday and the rest. I was talking to him Sunday night. He is working hard to pack the Sunday Tabernacle at Winona Lake next Sunday afternoon. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

The Absolute Essentials of a Successful Christian Life

BY JOHN R. RICE

(Sermon preached Sunday morning, August 27, 1939, Dallas Texas. Stenographically reported.)

I come this morning to speak to you on what I think is a very important subject: *The Absolute Essentials of a Successful Christian Life*. Christians should succeed. There are a number of Scriptures which indicate that a Christian should be full of joy, victorious, and that everything he puts his hand to ought to be successful. Paul said in Philippians 4:13:

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

That means success for a Christian. Here is another good scripture in the First Psalm, verses one to three:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

That is one of the strangest, most all-inclusive sentences in the Bible, that a man who follows certain requirements — everything he does will prosper; that he can certainly expect full prosperity.

Here is another one. In John 16:24, Jesus said:

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

God wants a Christian to be full of joy because he gets what he wants, because he gets all he asks for, and because he gets his prayers answered.

The same thing is told in John 15:7:

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

A Christian can have what he wants when he is in the will of God, the Word of God abiding in him, and he abiding in Christ.

Again, in Psalm 37:4, the scripture says:

"Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

A Christian can prosper. He can have what he goes after, his work can be blessed, his prayers can be answered, and his heart can be happy. His family can be cared for, his business may turn out successful. That is the plain promise of the Word of God.

Here is another promise for success. In the first chapter of Joshua the angel of God appeared to Joshua and said, "You come on and enter into the land of Canaan, and as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." And then he said:

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left hand, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not de-

part out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:7, 8).

I know human prosperity does not necessarily indicate spiritual prosperity. But Christian prosperity certainly involves material things as well as spiritual things. I want to lay on your hearts some things about this that are absolute essentials to success in Christian living.

Introduction: What Is Successful Christian Living?

I think I had better define *Christian success*. What do I mean when I say I want to be a successful Christian? First of all, I mean happiness. A Christian ought to be happy. A long faced Christian, one who isn't happy in the Lord, one who has no joy, is a mighty poor signboard for Christ. If you can't be happy, surely you can't recommend Christ. A Christian ought to be happy.

You remember the scripture in Acts 8 says that down in Samaria where Philip went and preached the gospel, "There was great joy in that city." And you find at Pentecost, after the power of God came upon the Christians and many were saved, that they "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people." A Christian ought to be happy and Jesus said that is one reason to pray. He said, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." There are many such promises throughout the Bible.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

Again the Scripture says:

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7).

A Christian ought to be happy. You are not a successful Christian if you are bowed down with sorrows and burdens and care.

Another thing, I think the test of a Christian's prosperity is: Do you get your prayers answered? I mean to be a happy and successful Christian would involve necessarily that you get what you need. I don't mean what you sometimes think you need, but what you really need you can get. Prayer is more than just asking. Prayer is more than just adoration. Prayer is not only talking to God, but real prayer is getting things from God. Prayer is going to God and getting what you need. You are not a successful Christian if day by day you need things and cannot get them.

Suppose there is a depression on and here I am a child of God. Next door to me lives a child of the devil. He is out of work, and I am out of work. He doesn't know what to do. He is under the circumstances and bowed down by the depression and sorrow, and he can't get a job. And I am a Christian, and I live next door, and I tell him that God answers prayer, but He

doesn't answer mine for a job. I can't get work, and I can't pay my bills. I am defeated and downcast just like my unsaved neighbor. If so, I certainly am not a successful Christian. If a Christian can't get his prayers answered, that Christian is not a prosperous Christian. I do not mean that Christians are sure to have everything they want, but I say, What Christians really need they have a right to get, and if you are right with God and learn the secret of prosperity, you can. I say, Christians surely ought to learn how to be prosperous and get their prayers answered.

Here is another necessary mark of a successful Christian life. If you are going to be a prosperous Christian, you must be a soul winning Christian. Do you believe that a real Christian — one who is successful, his Christianity makes his heart happy all the day and gives him victory over his problems and supplies all his needs — do you believe that yet he cannot convince a single soul that there is something to it? What I am saying is, Mr. Patton, if you are the right kind of a Christian and it works for you, if your Christianity is successful, somebody else will catch it. Your brother that lives next door will say, "I wish I had what Tom Patton has." You will be able to win somebody else to trust in Jesus Christ and to have the same joy and same victories over sin and the same blessings you have. A really successful Christian would have to be a soul winner. If you are not, you are not doing what Jesus said. Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19); and He said, "Let him that heareth say, Come" (Rev. 22:17). The Scripture says about New Testament Christians, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). And saved people in the Bible who were happy, real Christians, were soul winning Christians. I say now, No matter how much you pray, or how much you go to church or how much you get your prayers answered, if you are not a soul winner, you are a failure. You are not doing the main thing that God wants a Christian to do. Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." If you walk after Christ you will be a soul winner. You are not successful, you are not really following Christ, if you do not win souls. Your Christianity is a failure if you do not win somebody to Christ. You say, "I pay the preacher to win souls." Yes, I know, but you are still not a (CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

Editor Home For All Services Sunday

Editor John R. Rice will be home for all services Sunday and will speak as follows:

Radio WRR, 7:30 a.m.

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Classes for all ages. Hear John R. Rice teach large adult class.

10:45 a.m., Sermon by Pastor at Sunset and Tyler Streets.

7:45 p.m., Evangelistic Message in open air at 201 East Tenth St.

Essentials of a Successful Christian Life

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

successful Christian unless you are a soul winner.

I want you to see that there is a real standard, a high standard of daily blessedness and spiritual prosperity that every Christian can obtain. I will show you from the word of God how you may have it.

Fourth: A Christian who is a spiritual Christian can do some good work for God and that work will be blessed and will continue and grow and prosper. A Christian who is a prosperous Christian will have a job for God and will do that job and be blessed in it. "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." The Lord plainly promises it. Look at First Corinthians the twelfth chapter where the Scripture says:

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit," etc. (I Cor. 12:4, 8, 9).

And then in First Corinthians 12:7 the Scripture says:

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

God wants every Christian not only to have the Spirit inside but some working of the Spirit. God has a work for everyone to do, I mean something else besides soul winning: it may be teaching a Sunday school class or being head of a department or running a mission. Maybe it is leading a choir, maybe it is being pastor of a church, but God has some work in which the Spirit of God can show Himself and bless and prosper every Christian. New Testament Christianity does not anticipate seat warming Christians. These people whose Christianity consists of "Go to church and sing when the others sing, rise when they rise and sit down when they sit down, put a quarter in the collection plate" — that kind of Christianity is not prosperous nor successful Christianity. That kind of deadbeat riding instead of pulling, that kind of being a load instead of a team, that is not prosperous Christianity.

There is something for you to do. It may not be leadership, some official position. I mean, God does not necessarily want everybody on the ship to be the captain. But He wants everybody to be a full-fledged seaman. There is some work for you to do for Christ. I would make up my mind: "God helping me, I will start out to find my job for Christ." You are not a successful Christian if you do not have something to do for Christ. I would say, "This is my job, and I will learn to do it."

Years ago my Uncle George N. Rice of Gainesville, Texas, who has gone to Heaven now, said to his pastor, "I wish there was something I could do. I am so useless. I don't know what I can do."

"There is one thing you can do," the preacher said.

"What is it?"

"You know, I like to shake your hand. I know how you love people."

It was amazing how everybody loved Uncle George. When my father's first wife died, he left two children with his brother, my Uncle George, and he reared Jimmie, my older sister. All the youngsters in the whole town piled into his big house. Half the town pretty soon called him "Uncle George." I went to see him before his death, and there came in a middle-aged woman, past fifty. When she came in she stooped over his bed and kissed him, and said, "How are you, Uncle?" She

wasn't a bit kin to him. She was a former member of a fine big class of 100 girls he had had in Sunday school. She had been kissing Uncle George all her life, and when he was seventy years old and sick she came in and kissed him. This is the point I started to say, everybody loved him.

I was at his house for dinner one day and an old fellow came by with a load of wood. Uncle George bought the wood from him, though he didn't need it, and made the man get down off his wagon and tie his horses and come into that nice dining room with its beautiful silverware, and the gleaming white linen cloth. He brought that man in with his overalls and sat him down at the table. Aunt Gertrude had everything as fine as could be. He would bring in any chicken peddler to eat dinner with him. He didn't just give them some food in the kitchen, but he would bring them in to the dining table with the family. Everybody loved Uncle George.

He said, "I wish I could do something for the Lord."

And the preacher said, "You can. There is one thing you can do. You love people. You get out in the vestibule of this church and shake hands with everybody that comes in the door, and then shake hands with everybody that goes out."

And my Uncle George did. Later he was partially paralyzed and everywhere he went they had to take him in a wheel chair. They would set that chair in the vestibule by the door, and it got to be a custom that hardly anybody used the other doors at all. Everybody went in one door and they would file by and shake hands with Uncle George, and as they went out, they would file by and shake hands with Uncle George.

Now I tell you God wants every Christian to have a job and fill that job happily, successfully, prosperously. If you do not do it, you are a seat-warming Christian, a parasite, growing without any roots.

A prosperous Christian, then, would have happiness in his heart, would get his prayers answered, would win some souls and would have a job to do for God. But how will he do it? What are the absolute essentials of success in the Christian life?

I. First Essential: A Working Knowledge of the Bible

So I go to the first essential to gain success in the Christian life; that is, a working knowledge of the Bible. No Christian can be a good Christian without the Bible. This thing has been on my heart for some time, ever since I had my Sunday school class down at the park. You people have been stuffed and stuffed. It has been very much like the way they fatten ducks for Christmas in some places. They put a duck in a narrow cage and feed him and feed him, and a few days before Christmas time they nail down between the duck's web feet some broad-headed tacks and fasten the duck's feet down to the floor on each side, and all he has to do is to stand there. They then feed him and he eats until he becomes fatter and fatter, and he doesn't lose any of it by exercise. Then when it seems he cannot eat any more, they take a broom handle and put some food in his mouth and cram it down. And that is like some of you people are. You are nailed here and you sit around with indigestion. You don't digest your food. All this hearing and no doing is not good for a Christian.

A lot of you people have sat under my ministry, have been in my Sunday school class week in and week out, month in and month out for years, and you can't quote ten verses in the Bible! You are nothing but common parasites. You don't mean business for God. You are insincere. You haven't taken it to heart. You have sat under the light and basked and turned it away like rain on a duck's back. If you do not learn more about the Bible, God is going to cast you away. You won't have your prayers answered. People will have no confidence in your religion. You will never get a soul saved.

I know if you are right with God you can learn something about the Bible. If you don't remember it as you used to, then just work harder.

You have said, "I can't do it." You can do other things that you want to do. And you can have a working knowledge of the Bible if you try. The main reason is that you don't even read it. And the reason you don't read it is because you are not interested.

Anybody can sit down and read four chapters a day in the Bible and read it through in a year's time. That is mighty little, and no Christian ought to be willing for a year to go by without reading the Bible through at least once. You can read it through in about fifteen to thirty minutes a day. In the Psalms you could read four chapters in ten minutes a day, sometimes. But with an average of not over thirty minutes a day you can read the Bible through in less than a year, by reading four chapters a day. Or by reading three chapters a day and five on Sunday you can read it through in a year. You read the newspapers more than that. You gab about your neighbors more than that.

If you really read your Bible, and read it with an open heart, you would absorb some of it. Any Christian who reads the Bible and marks the verses that are a blessing to him, and then goes back where he marked them and reads them over again, will soon know them, and have them in his heart. Memorizing isn't so hard. We say we know them by heart. The reason you don't know the Scriptures by heart is because you haven't taken them to heart. Anybody can learn some of the Bible if he works at it. I say, you can have a working knowledge of the Word of God.

You have to know some of the promises to have happiness. You cannot understand this world and its sorrows and the problems you meet, you can't live on top of them unless you have a knowledge of the Word of God. I thank God for Romans 8:28. If there comes a time after I have sweated and worked and prayed and given until my family went without and used second hand furniture, and I see the fruit of my tears and prayers go up in flames like when our building burned, then I need Romans 8:28. And thank God, I have it and I know it, and I can quote it. And in the blackest night my heart ever saw, I know it still, and I have it in my heart, thank God. If I come to the time after I have toiled and toiled and prayed and sweated and seen no fruit of my labor, I can go back to Matthew 28:20 where the Lord Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always."

In Matthew, chapter 28, verses 19 and 20, the Lord said:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

You may feel your work is in vain. You may not see any outward manifestation, but you have Christ's promise, He is with you! You are going to have to know the promises of the Bible to have happiness and contentment and a sense of victory.

How blessed the Bible is, and how blessed it has been to me! Many is the time I have turned and said:

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"

I get tired and worn out. This past week I have been driving to Kilgore, Texas, and preaching three times a day, at 10:00 o'clock in the morning, at 1:30 on the radio, and then at night. I have been preaching three times a day, and last Wednesday I spoke four times. I drove back to Kilgore Thursday and drove back again here Friday night and got in bed at 1:30 Saturday morning. I want to preach and thank God that I can. Yet my work is hard. But thank God I can say:

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have

no might he increaseth strength."

"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:28-31 — Quoted from memory).

And I can go on about my job. Today I have preached on the radio and taught my class and then preaching in this service now and tonight I can preach again. Then this afternoon I must get things ready for my paper. After speaking twice last Wednesday night, four times in the day and driving 125 miles, I had to get copy ready for the paper and it was after midnight when I got to bed. But God renews strength. I memorized the promise, I believe it, I claimed it and God renews my strength.

Do you have the Bible marked at sweet promises and do you weep over them and thank God for them? You are not a successful Christian and you cannot be happy without a working knowledge of the Bible.

I go to troubled homes many times. I go to people who have a boy in jail, I go into homes where somebody has had an automobile accident and a life has been snatched out, and I stand and look into an open casket upon the cold features that somebody loved. Every time I hear somebody say, "Why did this happen to me?" I know they need the Word of God. If they had the Word hidden away in their hearts they would know that God is good and that He means good by this. They could sing:

"God's way is the best way
Though I may not see
Why sorrows and trials
Oft gather 'round me.
He ever is seeking
My gold to refine,
I'll trust in Him always,
My Saviour divine."

If you know the Bible, the Word of God, and hide it in your heart, it will be a strength in the time of trouble. It will be a joy in the blackest night that ever comes. It will be the voice of God when no other voice could tell you which way to go. *You need a working knowledge of the Bible.* You will have to learn at least some of it. You will never be a successful Bible Christian unless you memorize parts of the Bible. At least I would get enough to help in trouble. I would memorize a lot of it. I would hide it in my heart.

Another thing about knowing the Bible is, you need a working knowledge of the Bible to whip sin. There isn't any such thing as a Christian living a victorious life and winning out on the sin question (I am talking about saved people), except with the Word of God. David asked this question to the Lord, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" Then He answered, "By taking heed thereto according to thy word." Then David wrote it down, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." There is no such thing as a Christian living a life pleasing to God except he know enough of the Bible to know what pleases God.

There are some men in this church I have prayed for, and there are one or two I am getting especially anxious about on the cigarette question. I know how you can get victory over cigarettes, but the reason you do not is that you do not take time to get the thing whipped on the Bible basis. I would say, "I will take thirty minutes every day of my life and find scriptures that fit my case." Then I would pray and claim the Word of God for the grace I needed and for the help I needed and for comfort for my heart. I would claim the Scripture and go to God in prayer and tell Him so. I would go to God every day for grace to live that day without cigarettes. After a few days you would have the devil so scared and whipped you can leave them alone the rest of your life. You are not going to do it otherwise. The Bible has a remedy for sin. There is more than that, blessed be God. The Psalmist says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways?" and then answers back, "By taking heed thereto according to thy Word."

Then he says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee."

If you don't know what God's Word says, you will not know whether you are sinning or not.

When Jesus Himself wanted to whip the devil, He picked His answer out of the Word of God. Every time the devil would tempt Him, He would answer back, "It is written." And you can whip the devil, too, if you know the Bible, the Word of God.

More than that, a working knowledge of the Bible is important because it is God's only way for you to serve Him. You can't win souls without the Word of God. Somebody says, "I don't know why I don't win souls." You can't win souls without the Bible. The Scripture says, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him" (Psa. 126:6). And the Bible says, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Preachers may depend on illustrations, but they won't do it. I think illustrations may be used by God to make clear a scripture, but just a tender story isn't enough. Hebrews 4:12 says, "The word of God is quick and powerful, and is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." I saw it Friday night when I was at Kilgore. There was a great crowd. I preached to those oil workers from all over that country. When I preached on "The Great White Throne Judgment of the Unsaved Dead" and used scripture after scripture, I felt and I believed and I claimed and it happened — the Holy Spirit pressed it on the hearts and men were convicted. I came to one young man and asked him, "Are you a Christian?"

And he said, "No."
"You ought to be," I said.
"I know it."
"Don't you want to be?"
"Yes."

"Well, come on then."

And he came openly to trust Christ and claim Him. God answered prayer and used His word.

You never will win souls unless you learn to use the Bible, the Word of God. You say that you do not know enough of the Bible. Well, you know John 3:16. Get a working knowledge of John 3:16 and get the Spirit to help you use it. There is John 5:24, John 1:12, Romans 8:9, etc. A Christian is better off with just a little handful of scriptures that you know and can quote and really believe, than with a smattering of a good many. You can win souls. If you have a working knowledge, not a perfect knowledge, of the Bible, you can win souls, but you can't do it without knowing and using some of the Bible.

God intends every fellow, if he wants to make good for God, to give attention to it.

A working knowledge of the Bible is essential also for daily guidance. You need the Bible to guide you and settle your problems of daily living.

Here is a girl that says, "Brother Rice, why is it not all right for me to wear slacks?"

Deuteronomy 22:5 says:

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God."

Now if you know that one verse of scripture, you will know that no woman has any business wearing slacks or shorts. (If she wears shorts, she is short somewhere else!) Just one verse of scripture will settle that matter. If you don't know the Bible, you may go into sin. You need guidance from God.

You say, "I believe in asking the Holy Spirit to guide me." Do you really think you can come to God and say, "I really don't care about Your Word. I know You have written instructions there, but I want the Holy Spirit to show me what You want me to do." Do you think the Holy Spirit will do it? Not usually. The Holy Spirit works with the Bible and in cooperation with the Bible. God's Word has already told you what you ought to do about many things, and you cannot be a successful, prosperous

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

THE SWORD OF THE LORD

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JOHN R. RICE, EDITOR, Pastor of Fundamental Baptist Church

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Essentials of a Successful Christian Life

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Christian without a working knowledge of the Bible.

That would mean memorizing some of it. That would mean meditating on it day and night. I would set my life sails by the blow of the winds of the Bible. First of all, I would read it. I would read it every day. I would read it through at least once a year. That isn't hard. You can do that by reading four chapters a day, or by reading three chapters on week days and five on Sunday. Then the second thing, I would memorize some parts of it. The Scripture said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee." I would find some good promises and mark them and memorize them and say them to myself. Then after you memorize them, meditate on them. The Word of God is sweet. It is rich. You would rejoice in it.

Out yonder is an old cow. She has better sense than a lot of Christians. You have teeth above and below too, and a cow doesn't. A cow just has teeth on the lower jaw. A cow wraps her tongue around some grass, pulls it into her mouth, cuts forward with her teeth, chews it once and down it goes and she grabs another mouthful! After she is full she will lie down in the shade of a tree, and she says, "Let's see what I have here," and she will bring up a mouthful and chew and chew on it. That is her cud. She is lying down in the shade to enjoy it. You know, a cow has more stomachs than you have. A cow has four. So she brings her food back and chews it and digests it and gets the good out of it.

Now the word "meditate" in the original language is the same word for chewing the cud. God wants you to meditate in the Bible, chew the cud in the Bible. Read it then chew it good. Have as much sense as a cow! God wants you to meditate therein. I would form this habit. Then what I find in the Bible I would believe it and what I believe, I would practice. God will bless it to your heart.

II. Second Essential To Successful Christian Life: Daily Prayer

Now let's see the next thing — daily meeting with God. You cannot be a prosperous Christian without daily meeting with God, particularly for prayer.

Pray for forgiveness. The Lord Jesus said:

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

You are already saved, I know, but you need a daily cleansing, a daily confession of your sins, a daily wiping out and having renewed confidence and fellowship with God. You need to pray for forgiveness.

Then you need to take your burdens to God, every day "casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you." The Scripture says:

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

Do you know how not to have care?

You say, "Brother Rice, I have some things that are heavy. I have some burdens on me."

I know it. There is no way for a Christian to go without burdens except to turn them over to the Lord. We ought to have burdens. The Bible says, "Every man shall bear his own burden," and yet He says, "Be careful for nothing." Every day take your burdens and cares and lay them all on Jesus Christ and trust Him and have a time of prayer. The best time is early in the morning. Every day meet God early in the morning and pray and get your burdens lifted, get your sins all out of the way by daily meeting with God.

What else in this daily meeting with God? Ask God what to do today. You say, "There are certain things I must do today. I must have God's wisdom." Well, ask for it for the Scripture says:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be

given him" (James 1:5).

Every day go to God and talk with Him and say, "Lord, show me what to do today."

I knew one farmer in west Texas who raised corn by prayer. Nobody raised corn around there. The reason was just now and then, about one year out of three, there was enough rain for corn. The rest of the time they just wasted the seed and the use of the land and wasted all the time and effort, so they thought it was not worth it. Now and then they had a good crop once every four or five years. But this farmer, Mr. Wolf, planted corn. First he prayed, "Lord, shall I plant corn this year," and if the Lord said "Yes," he would go ahead and plant it and he would make a good crop.

So as this man, we need wisdom from Heaven. I say pray every day for wisdom. Ask God to prosper you. No Christian is a successful Christian, a useful Christian who does not meet God every day and have this thing settled about his sins and burdens, problems and worries. So we ought to pray through to God every day. You will not prosper without it.

What else? Another thing every one of us ought to do.

III. Third Essential: Definite Christian Training and Preparation

What is the secret of a really prosperous, successful Christian life?

The third secret is this, a definite training for what you ought to do. Every Christian needs training. A good many scriptures say that. For instance, in the Great Commission the Lord says, "Go and make disciples" — that is getting people saved, baptizing them — and then He said, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). Now no Christian will observe the Bible commands except he is taught to do so. People need teaching how to live right. Why, look at Luke the 11th chapter. The disciples came to Jesus and one said, "Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples." John taught his disciples to pray. John had special classes in prayer life for his disciples and taught them how to pray. And Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, and people need training even to know how to pray. They certainly need training how to win souls, they need training about living a separated life, and no Christian will be a successful Christian who does not take some definite training.

At Kilgore the other day a man of about sixty or sixty-five years old had just been saved. The preacher took me out to see him. The preacher asked him how he was feeling. He said he was feeling fine. "I tell you, I wonder why I ever put it off so long. It is wonderful to be saved, and I am saved, sure enough. A lot of people are just afraid somebody will laugh at them. If any of these rough necks laugh at me, I will just knock them end for end, and I will make Christians of them," he said.

Now that new convert won't make Christians out of some fellow like that. He is wrong about it. He knows how to handle rough necks. He has been out in the oil fields all his days nearly, but he must be taught another way besides that to make a Christian! You must train men if they are to win men. Just to whale away with your fist because somebody laughs at you doesn't make him into a Christian.

So no Christian is going to be a good Christian without some definite training in Christian living. There are many scriptures that say so. Second Timothy 2:15 says:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Most of you Christian workers are workers not approved of God. Most teachers do not appear unashamed rightly dividing the word of truth.

You ought to take training to teach a class. Some of you ought to go to a Bible Institute and the rest of you ought to take some special training about your department in Sunday school, or how to have jail services. You need some special supervision to teach you how to have street meetings. You

need teaching as to how to win souls. Every Christian ought to work at it.

One of the saddest things I know about this church — I write books and pamphlets that go all over America. Zondervan Publishing House printed one book of revival sermons for me, and Fundamental Truth Publishers printed "Jewish Persecution." And here people in my church, who have been here six or seven years, who have never read them. Up in the North and East and West, the book stores all over the nation sell my books, and some of you people don't read them. Not just my books, but I can't get you to pay twenty cents for "How to Pray," by Torrey, or a book of sermons by Moody, or "Bible Questions Answered," by Gray, or books on the second coming by somebody else. Do you know why? You are dead upstairs. You are petrified. And you Christians will not be any good if you are the kind of Christians that won't read Christian literature, that won't take a study course. You come and sit here, year in and year out, and hear a fellow preach. It goes in one ear and out the other. You come to Sunday school without studying your lesson. You don't read gospel literature. You won't read revival sermons and Bible studies. You do not take your Bibles and check up on what I preach this morning. When I offer my paper and send it cheaper than I do to other people, a lot of you are not even good enough Christians that you want Christian literature of any kind. You are not studying to be good workmen and you are not good workmen. Nobody will be any account for God unless he works at it, takes some definite course of training, maybe private help, any help anywhere you can get it, maybe just diligent, prayerful, studious reading. Maybe you should take a teachers' study course, or correspondence courses from Moody Bible Institute, maybe you ought to go off for two or three years for definite training in Moody. But according to the Bible, nobody is going to be able to observe all Jesus commanded unless somebody teaches them.

Here in the eighth chapter of Acts the Ethiopian eunuch was riding in the chariot. Probably one servant was holding an umbrella over him, another may have been driving. He was robed in rich garments. He was the treasurer of the nation, a man of great authority. He rides down through the desert. A poor preacher comes along named Philip (just a deacon), but he had really been having a big meeting in Samaria. He comes along and says, "What are you reading?" and the eunuch told him he was reading Isaiah but that he didn't understand it. He was reading in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah where the Scripture said, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth," etc. Philip said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The eunuch didn't say, "Nuts, I wouldn't be reading it if I didn't," but he said, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" Then Philip said, "I will teach you," and he got up there beside the eunuch in the chariot and taught him. New born Christians ought to expect to get some training and teaching.

And that is the reason some of you are not successful Christians. You won't read good books. You won't take study courses. The fact of the business is, what I am preaching this morning are the very fundamentals of Christian living, and you haven't taken any notes on this sermon today. You haven't marked any scriptures. You haven't memorized any scriptures. You haven't put down any references. It will be out of your head before you get out of the door this morning. But I want to tell you, no Christian will ever be a successful Christian who does not say, "God helping me, I am going to take what training I need to be something for God."

That is the reason some of you teachers are no good. You can't be a teacher approved of God without work, preparation, training. You don't want to do any studying. You don't want to take any time. You can't be a superintendent of a department because you don't want it to cost you anything. It takes work to be any account for God. Mr. Hoover, it takes work to be

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

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"I was glad the other day when I visited a friend of mine. She said she was sitting looking out the window watching the mail man coming up the street reading her little paper, *The Sword of the Lord*. How glad I was to think that even mail men could get it to read while they were delivering them. . . . The mail man must have enjoyed reading it, as he kept on reading it until he had to leave it in the mail box."

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Sam Morris' Work

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

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a brick mason, doesn't it? It will wear your fingers off and without training will let you make a fool out of yourself because you make the joints come over each other instead of lapping them and then training and long practice is necessary to get a wall straight, plumb, level and strong. It takes training to make a brick layer. But you think that's all right, but you can be a good Christian without any work and training! No, you can't!

To be a school teacher after one has finished high school, he goes off to college and takes special training. But you think in God's work it doesn't matter. You can teach God's word without study of maps, or reading books, or learning or study anyway. You think so? *It isn't so!* I tell you, if you want to serve God you have got to work at it and get ready for it.

It is the same thing with personal soul winning, giving out tracts, preaching in the jail, etc. Anything in the world worth doing is worth learning how to do well. Unless you work at it you will never learn to do it acceptably to God. Sure.

I tell you, there has been too much of this same thing all over the country. You think if you believe the Bible it is all right to be ignorant. But that isn't so. I tell you in this church we ought to settle some things this morning. We don't have a lawyer in this church (some lawyers need to be in church). We do not have a doctor in this church. We don't have a dentist in this church. This church is only seven years old, and we have only had one public school teacher in this church, who came here this summer and put her membership in the church but has gone back to her school.

This church started out with people that didn't have training. There were no musicians practically. My wife played the piano. When we started out we had no trained song leader. We didn't have anybody in this church who knew how to run a department in the Sunday school. We didn't have trained teachers. We started out with untrained singers and untrained soul winners and untrained musicians, and so on. About music—why don't a bunch of you say, "I have a boy or a girl. I am going to start them taking music lessons. My girl would be fine for a real pianist." Why doesn't somebody say, "I will wade in now." Mrs. Mayo, what about you? I would learn to play the piano. In all these departments we have need for more pianists. I would say, "I will get ready to play the piano."

I wonder how many of you will say, "Yes, I want to learn to do

something good for God?" You can't do it without learning. I wonder how many will say, "God helping me, I am going to try to take lessons or whatever is necessary to play some instrument for God?" How many will say, "I am going to start that. I will try to get myself to be some good in music for God?" Here is one. God bless you, son. That is right. God bless you, June. You can do it. You ought to do that. I tell you right now, I love my crowd. You know I do, don't you? In lots of ways you are the best church I ever saw. I tell you now, I don't believe it pleases God to have a church full of numbskulls, nobody who knows how to do anything. It takes working at it to learn how. My children have a natural gift for music. They sang by the time they could talk but I still have to send them to take voice lessons from some one that can teach them. Joanna goes to the piano and she can pick out with one finger a tune on the piano but that is not playing good enough for God. It takes training for it. In order to have a fine orchestra or a great choir, you have got to train for it. I mean some of you ought to go to Moody Bible Institute, getting ready, taking every teacher training course. But God wants a sharper ax. If you have a good ax, let God sharpen it. Well, all right, definite training. You can't be a successful Christian without learning how. You can't be a good teacher without working at it. You have to learn how to teach attractively to young people, you must learn how to build up the attendance of a Sunday school class, to be a real Christian.

IV. Fourth Essential: Filled With The Holy Spirit

If you are going to be a real Christian and do anything for God you must have a special anointing of the Holy Spirit of God. You must have. I would like to take time to talk about some other things, too, but I can't. For instance, if you can not control the lust for money, if you can't learn to tithe and give offerings, you will never be a success. You must make a complete surrender of self. If you say, "My life is yours, God, you can have it—my life, my influence and my talents," that will include tithing and giving up anything that displeases God. I wish I could take time for that, but I can't take much time for it now. A daily self surrender and crucifixion of self involves giving up money, giving tithes and offerings that belong to God, and then what you have left all belongs to God, too. And what you spend for yourself, spend as He directs. Maybe sometimes you ought to keep the tithe and give God the nine-tenths. In any case, put God first and crucify self and be separate from the world. You can't be a successful Christian without it.

The last point: You must be especially anointed or you can't have power and blessing on your Christian life. You need the Holy Spirit of God. Let me tell you, my friends, the Pentecostals are wrong about a lot of things, but they are dead right that a Christian can have a special endowment and power of the Holy Spirit. They are wrong about tongues and they are wrong about a lot of the rolling and hollering and they are wrong about claiming sinless perfection, but they are right when they say that a Christian can have a definite empowering by the Spirit of God. And I tell you now, teachers, superintendents—I have had it on my heart about you Sunday school teachers—if your teaching is any good, you must have God breathe on you. You can't do it otherwise. Five loaves and two fishes won't feed five thousand people, and have twelve baskets left over. They just won't do it. Did you know that? Listen to me, you take just a walking stick and hold it out and try to divide the Red Sea and it won't do it. A walking stick won't divide the Red Sea. Did you know that. And another time seven loaves and a few fishes are not enough to feed four thousand people. They just won't do it. And one man with the jaw bone of a donkey can't go out and kill a thousand armed men. He just can't do it, if you don't put a miracle in it and have God's power in it and

have God to do it. Do you see that?

I tell you now, one man, poor, weak and puny, can't go out here and take a soul away from Satan. He can't do it, and all of us together can't do it. We must have the power of God upon us. It takes a miracle. There isn't any such thing as living a prosperous, successful Christian life without an anointing from God, without day by day having the Spirit of God to breathe upon you and give you joy, power, wisdom and give you the witness you ought to have. You know that. We need to come back to the thing we had in the early days of this church when we prayed and said, "Oh, God, fill me with the Holy Spirit, fill me with the Holy Spirit." We need to pray that again. Suppose we sing it.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill me,
I need Thee, I seek Thee.
Come, Holy Spirit, fill me,
Lord, fill me with the Holy Ghost.

Oh, the power of God! That is what it takes whether you teach a Sunday school class or whether you are superintendent of a department. Some of you teachers can't find boys and girls for your classes, you say. No, you can't. But the Spirit of God could find some. If you had Him, He could. You superintendents say, "I don't know what to do about teachers when they don't do the work." You can't do it, but the Spirit of God can. That is what all of us lack. That is the one main thing.

The Spirit of God can do what we can't do. If we have Him, if we are anointed with Him, we can have our problems settled. The Spirit of God can rake up some more boys, can't He? We can't, but the Spirit of God can. We had just as well quit trying to serve God in our own poor human ways. We had just as well quit trying to serve God in our own power and wisdom. All our influence together is not enough to get one sinner saved without the Spirit of God. Only God can touch his heart and save him.

All of us can't get a single prayer answered, all of us here can't take the Word of God and put it into one heart, for the human heart is at enmity against the Bible and only the Spirit of God can break that down and plant the roots there. If we don't have an anointing, an endowment, a filling of the Spirit of God, then all is vain. Our fathers used to sing

it in country churches long ago and I think it is true:

"Brethren, we have met to worship
And adore the Lord our God.
Will you pray with all your power
While we try to preach the Word?"

"All is vain unless the Spirit
Of the Holy One come down,
Brethren, pray and Holy Manna
Will be showered all around."

Oh, that is what we need!

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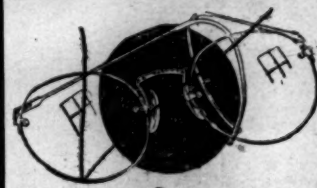
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